

REMARKS

This is in full and timely response to the Office Action mailed on June 7, 2004.
Reexamination in light of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 15-39 are currently pending in this application, with claims 15 and 33 being independent.

No new matter has been added.

Rejection of the claims

While not conceding the propriety of this rejection and in order to advance the prosecution of the above-identified application, claims 1-14 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of their underlying subject matter, rendering the rejection as moot.

Newly added claims

Independent claim 15 and the claims dependent thereon include the features of:

protective material that maintains said electronic device within said case, said electronic device having user controls and control circuitry; and

a controlling interface, said controlling interface having exterior user controls disposed on said protective material that are structurally adapted for manipulation by a user of said electronic device, said electronic device maintained within said case being controllable by said exterior user controls, said exterior user controls being separate and distinct from said user controls and control circuitry.

Independent claim 33 and the claims dependent thereon include the step of:

maintaining an electronic device within a case, said electronic device having user controls and control circuitry;

disposing exterior user controls of a controlling interface on said case; and

using said exterior user controls to control said electronic device maintained within said case,

wherein said exterior user controls are structurally adapted for manipulation by a user of said electronic device, and

wherein said exterior user controls are separate and distinct from said user controls and control circuitry.

U.S. Patent No. 5,586,002 to Notarianni arguably teaches a protective case 10 including an interface housing 2 containing a computer device 30 (figure 1). The Office Action identifies element 20 of Notarianni as the controlling interface (Office Action at page 3).

Nevertheless, Notarianni fails to disclose, teach or suggest the controlling interface 20 having exterior user controls disposed on the interface housing 2 that are structurally adapted for manipulation by a user of the computer device 30. Instead, Notarianni teaches the controlling interface 20 as a data interface connector (column 5, lines 4-5).

Notarianni also fails to disclose, teach or suggest the computer device 30 being controllable by exterior user controls disposed on the interface housing 2.

Notarianni additionally fails to disclose, teach or suggest exterior user controls disposed on the interface housing 2 being separate and distinct from the user controls and control circuitry disposed on the computer device 30.

U.S. Patent No. 5,864,708 to Croft et al. (Croft) arguably teaches a docking station for docking a portable computer with a wireless interface.

However, Croft fails to disclose, teach or suggest the docking station 21 having exterior user controls disposed on disposed on its protective material that are structurally adapted for manipulation by a user of the computer device 11 (figure 4).

Croft also fails to disclose, teach or suggest the computer device 11 being controllable by exterior user controls disposed on the docking station 21.

Croft additionally fails to disclose, teach or suggest exterior user controls disposed on the docking station 21 being separate and distinct from the user controls and control circuitry disposed on the computer device 11.

U.S. Patent No. 6,148,353 to Cho arguably teaches a portable computer system for an audio expansion control function.

However, Cho fails to disclose, teach or suggest the docking station having exterior user controls disposed on disposed on its protective material that are structurally adapted for manipulation by a user of the host device (figure 4).

Cho also fails to disclose, teach or suggest the host device being controllable by exterior user controls disposed on the docking station.

Cho additionally fails to disclose, teach or suggest exterior user controls disposed on the docking station being separate and distinct from the user controls and control circuitry disposed on the host device.

Allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, all the claims now pending in the present application are allowable, and the present application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable

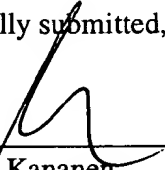
reexamination and reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments and remarks is courteously solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone Brian K. Dutton, Reg. No. 47,255, at 202-955-8753 or the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

If any fee is required or any overpayment made, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee or credit the overpayment to Deposit Account # 18-0013.

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Respectfully submitted,

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